

**In the specification**

**Please amend the paragraph starting on page 1, line 3 as follows:**

This is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application serial number 10/074,412, filed February 12, 2002, now U.S. Patent No. 6,679,559, issued January 20, 2004, the entire specification of which is incorporated herein by reference.

**Please amend the paragraph starting on page 2, line 17 and ending on page 3, line 14 as follows:**

There is considerable friction developed between the flighting of the auger flights and the bored holes which requires considerable power from the auguring machines, and which reduces the power available to the cutting heads and to convey the cut coal. Attempts have been made to reduce such frictional power losses in auger systems. For example, in U.S. Patent No. 3,036,821 issued to H.D. Letts, there is disclosed a spider device where bearings are attached between each of the linearly extending augers, and a plurality of legs are attached to the bearings to form a "spider". The spider somewhat supports the flighting on the bottom of the bored hole so that the flighting does not rub the ground as hard when rotating, thus reducing the power requirements of the auger machine. In U.S. Patent No. 5,685,382 issued to Deeter, there is disclosed a similar auger support having a plurality of radially extending support legs affixed a bearing

housing surrounding a bearing. The drive shank of an auger flight is rotatably supported by the bearing at one end of the auger flight, independently of the support provided by the auger flighting, to reduce wear and tear of the flighting and to reduce frictional drag of the auger flights. Finally, in U.S. Patent No. Re 24,503 to C.E. Compton, which was originally U.S. Patent No. ~~2,571,203~~ 2,751,203, there is disclosed a spider-type support system for an auger mining system. All of these devices, however, fail to solve a number of problems associated therewith.